

GRSMMP Conference Call 13 December, 2007 - Notes

1. A GRSMMP conference call was held on November 14, 2007. Participants in the conference call included Carl Ferraro (AL), Juan Moya (TX), Kendal Keyes (TX), Greg Ducote (LA), Randy Runnels (FL), Quenton Dokken (GoMex Foundation), Bobbi Reed (GoMex Foundation) Kris Benson (NOAA), Jeff Waters (COE, ERDC), Lynn Martin (COE, IWR), Angel Mislan (COE, New Orleans), Larry Parson (COE, Mobile), Ronnie Taylor (NOAA), and Nancy Wallace (NOAA). The conference call agenda was as follows:

Funding Opportunities

- GoMex Alliance Gov. Action Plan Implementation" federal funding opportunity (FFO)

Old Business

- Questionnaires

Related Activities

- Results of the LA Interagency Regional Sediment Management GIS Kickoff meeting
- Results of the LA Sand Management Working Group meeting

Proposed workshop

- RRCT/GRSMMP workshop

2. The conference call kicked off with discussions concerning Federal funding opportunities (FFO) through the NOAA Coastal Services Center to provide support to the states towards implementing the GoMex Alliance Governors' Action Plan. Nancy Wallace from NOAA's Special Projects group participated in the call to discuss and answer questions pertaining to this opportunity. The intent is to provide support to the states and their partnering entities, Federal agencies are not eligible. NOAA has proposed that as much as \$4.5 million be distributed to the Gulf states to support implementation efforts subject to the availability of FY 2008 appropriations. The anticipated federal funding per award is approximately \$750,000 to \$1,000,000 per year and will be adjusted based on available funding. The intent is to award a minimum of one grant to each Gulf coast state. It was pointed out that the proposed funding is currently in the Senate budget but not in the House 08 budget as of yet.

So that things are in motion once the funding becomes available, some fast approaching deadlines are already in place. A letter of intent (LOI) must be submitted to the NOAA, CSC by 10 January 2008 which outlines a statement of the purpose, summary of how funding will be allocated, description of intended benefits, and partnerships developed in the implementation process. A full proposal must then be submitted by February 8, 2008. It was proposed that the Gulf of Mexico Foundation coordinate these efforts on behalf of the states with collaborative input and support from each state. An RRCT steering committee conference call will be organized to get input from each of the state and federal agencies involved regarding the objectives of this effort. The announcement for the FFO through NOAA can be found at <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/funding/>.

3. The discussions led to the status of the questionnaires and to remind state representatives to keep a focus on providing their responses. Texas and Florida indicated that responses are being prepared and will hopefully be coming in soon.

4. Next on the agenda were discussions concerning some related meetings announced during the last conference call.

- Louisiana Sand Management Working Group Meeting was held Nov 29 at the Lindy Boggs Convention Center in New Orleans. The meeting was organized by the MMS and addressed issues associated with sand leases, potential uses of the offshore sediments, and related environmental studies. Various presentations were given relating to obtaining and using MMS leases for offshore sand resources. Presentations and discussions also addressed various projects planning to use resources at an area known as Ship Shoal. Physical and biological evaluations of Ship Shoal are being conducted at LSU to assess the effects of utilizing these resources.
- Louisiana Interagency RSM GIS Kickoff Meeting. The New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers (MVN) and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LADNR) hosted a meeting to identify interest by Louisiana State, local, and Federal agencies to participate in providing links to their geospatial data for inclusion into a web mapping services medium or a website. The meeting also provided a forum to brainstorm ideas for developing an implementation plan that captures agencies' needs for an interagency GIS portal. The meeting identified that each agency has some kind of sediment database operating independently and that a need exists for collaboration towards linking the information. A preliminary plan will be completed by the end of this summer at which time the group will meet again to evaluate the next steps. It is hoped that the experience from the Louisiana effort can be implemented by other Gulf states. Notes from this workshop are being prepared and will be distributed to the team when available.

5. The final topic on the agenda was a proposed workshop to be held during the week of March 24, 2008 in New Orleans. The need for a workshop was initiated through the Ecological Components focus workgroup to begin integrating the information from the other focus into the ecological considerations. It became apparent that ecological processes are affected whenever and wherever RSM is being implemented and must be considered and accounted for in the overall approach. It is believed that the ecological considerations are the catalyst to begin bringing together and integrating all of the focus areas towards a draft of the master plan and possibly review and lay out the next steps for linking the coordination between all of the work groups within the RRCT.

The Gulf of Mexico Foundation agreed to support the organization of the workshop and Bobbi Reed will begin looking into a facility and logistics. It was suggested that the Le Pavillon Hotel be considered as the meeting site. One of the previous workshops was held there and it worked out very well. In the mean time, the team members have been asked to be thinking about the overall workshop objects and how the program should be organized. These will be major topics for the next few conference calls.

6. The next GRSMMP conference call is scheduled for January 8, at 1:30 central.